

Fall 12-5-2014

Symphonic War and Peace

Lehigh University Music Department

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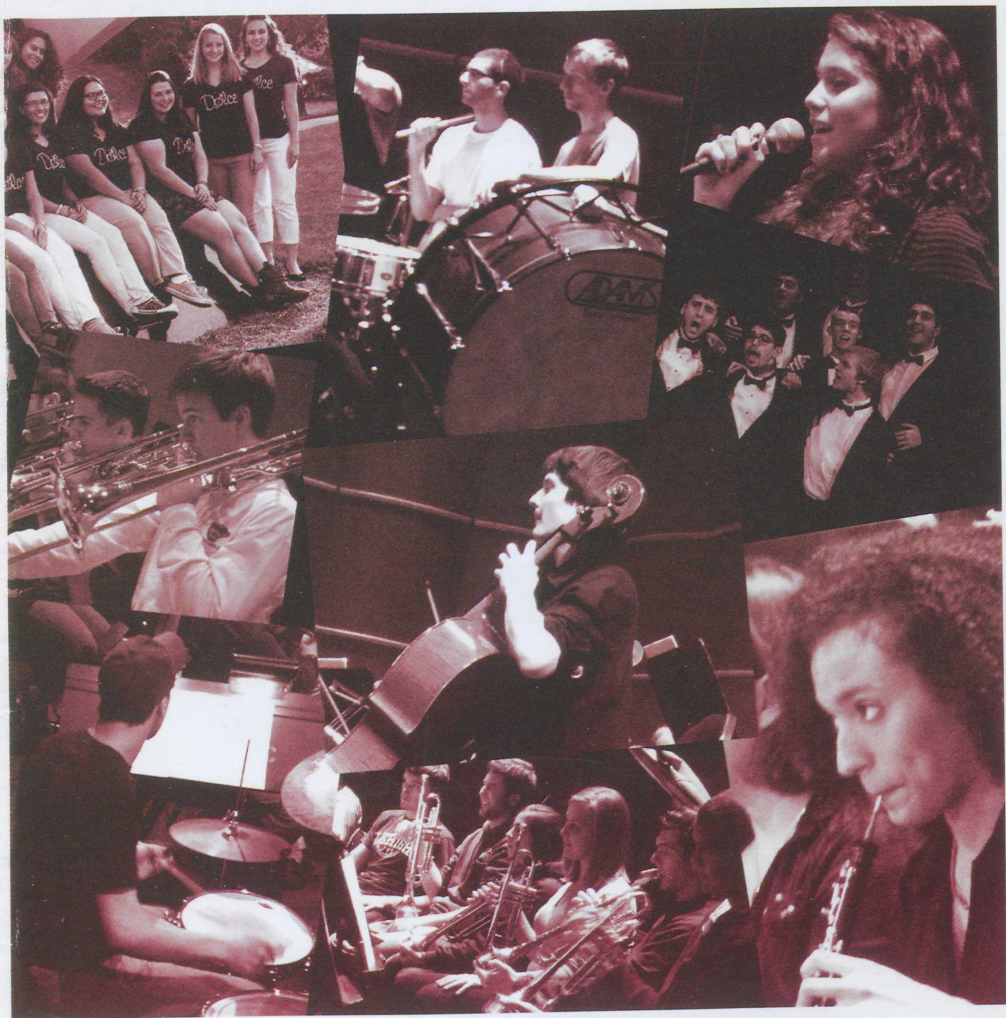
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Lehigh University Music Department

2014-2015 Season

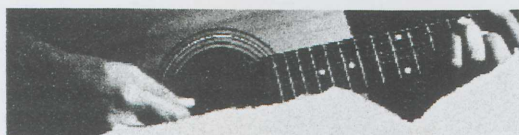


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Lehigh University Music Department presents

*Lehigh University
Philharmonic Orchestra*

Eugene Albulescu, *director*

*Symphonic
War and Peace*

Herman Bierbaum Memorial Concerts

Friday, December 5, 2014
Saturday, December 6, 2014
8:00 pm
Baker Hall
Zoellner Arts Center

LU PHIL 12-586-14

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PROGRAM

Finlandia

Jean Sibelius
(1865-1957)

Symphony No. 7 in C Major
(“Leningrad, 1941”)

Dmitri Shostakovich
(1906-1975)

Allegretto

Moderato (poco allegretto)

Adagio - (attacca) Allegro non troppo

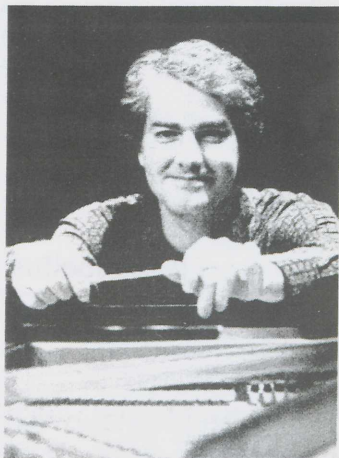
This program is dedicated to the memory of Herman Bierbaum.

Lehigh University Philharmonic Orchestra

Eugene Albulescu, *Director,*
Ronald J. Ulrich Endowed Chair in Orchestral Studies

Michael Jorgensen, *concertmaster*

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



An award-winning performer who combines a blazing technique with the artistic integrity and originality to express musical emotions at their most personal level, **Eugene Albulescu's** emergence on the international scene came in 1994, when his debut recording (*Albulescu Plays Liszt*, MANU1446) earned him the Grand Prix du Disque Liszt, awarded for the best Liszt recording of the year, adding Albulescu's name to that of legendary recipients such as Horowitz and Brendel. Noted New York Times critic Harold Schonberg

praised Albulescu in the American Record Guide for his "infallible fingers of steel," declaring that "nothing, anywhere, has any terrors for him." Albulescu performed in New York at BargeMusic in 1996, and later gave his Carnegie Hall debut in the Stern Auditorium in 2001. He has worked as conductor and soloist with numerous major orchestras including the New Zealand Symphony, The Romanian National George Enescu Philharmonic, the New York Chamber Orchestra, the Manukau City Symphony Orchestra, Christchurch Symphony, as well as the French Chamber Orchestra. His recordings have been released on Ode/Manu label, Ode/BMG, Trust, as well as Downstage Recordings. His recent engagements include a recording with the New Zealand Symphony on the Naxos label.

Albulescu's outreach in over one hundred US high schools has been significant, and his program "Inside the Piano" linking technology and creativity earned him coverage from the major media, including articles in the Washington Post, Philadelphia Inquirer, as well as the cover of Clavier Magazine. Albulescu performed at the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympics, and was invited to perform at the White House for the Millennium celebrations. He has performed and recorded on four continents.

Albulescu started his piano studies in Romania at age six, at the Enescu Music School in Bucharest. His family moved to New Zealand in 1984 to escape Romania's Communist regime. He completed his musical studies at Indiana University where, at nineteen, he was the youngest person ever to teach as an assistant instructor. Eugene Albulescu is a Steinway Artist who currently teaches on the music faculty at Lehigh University in Bethlehem, PA.



Described as an exceptional musician by Maestro Lorin Maazel, violinist **Michael Jorgensen** is the Professor of Practice in Orchestral Strings at Lehigh University, where he serves as the concertmaster of the Lehigh University Philharmonic Orchestra. He has also taught violin at Middle Tennessee State University, Covenant College, and the Wyoming Center for the Arts in their Touchstone program for at-risk youth. He has given masterclasses across the country at colleges including Austin Peay State University, Florida Gulf Coast University, University of South Dakota, and the College

of Wooster.

A member of the IRIS Orchestra in Memphis, Michael has also served as the concertmaster for the 75th-anniversary national tour of *Porgy and Bess*, the Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestra, Belle Meade Baroque, Lorin Maazel's Castleton Festival Orchestra (as one of the co-concertmasters), and the Cityside Symphony Orchestra in London. He has performed with the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, Nashville Chamber Orchestra, Alarm Will Sound, Chattanooga Symphony Orchestra, Huntsville Symphony Orchestra, the Gateway Chamber Orchestra, the Sphinx Symphony Orchestra, and others.

A dedicated recitalist and chamber musician, Michael has performed recitals at the London School of Contemporary Dance, the Taft Museum of Art Chamber Music Series, Gettysburg College, and has been a returning guest artist to Middle Tennessee State University. As a string quartet performer, he has been the first violin of the Eppes String Quartet in residence at Florida State University and founded the Frequency String Quartet, a new music group with an education and community building mission that was described as "a gifted and stimulating foursome" by Cincinnati classical music reviewer Mary Ellyn Hutton.

As a soloist, Michael has performed with organizations including the String Orchestra of Brooklyn, Sun City Chamber Players, the Florida State University Festival of New Music, the Gateways Music Festival, and the London School of Contemporary Dance.

Michael holds a bachelor's degree from the Eastman School of Music, a master's from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, and a doctorate from Florida State University.

PROGRAM NOTES

Sibelius: *Finlandia*

In November of 1899, inspired by Tsar Nicholas II's "February Manifesto" which stripped power from the Finnish, a group of musicians (including Sibelius) called "Young Finland" put together a benefit concert in support of censored journalists. The concert was a thinly veiled appeal to the spirit of Finnish independence and nationalism which Sibelius supported with his composition entitled *Finland Awakes*, a prelude followed by six patriotic tableaux. By the following year, Sibelius had reworked the sixth tableau entitled *Finland Awakes* into what is commonly known today as *Finlandia* and later formed the orchestral suite *Scenes historiques* out of parts of the remainder. At that point in the country's history, Finns had begun to be proud of their cultural and national heritage, so while *Finlandia* was not based on native dances and songs like most works of Romantic Nationalism, the work was Sibelius's own deeply personal form of folk music. The piece became a part of Finland's folk tradition because it captured the imagination of the Finnish people.

In its final form, *Finlandia* was intended to portray Finland's awakening and fighting spirit, which can be seen especially in the defiant quality of the brass themes at the beginning of the work and the fanfare at the close. It proved so exciting to Finnish audiences and so revolutionary that the Russian authorities forbade performances of the work. The piece begins with dark clouds in the form of an ominous brass crescendo, to which the woodwinds and strings respond with a calmer, yet determined theme. The slow introduction eventually transitions into an *allegro moderato* and a brass fanfare revealing a fighting spirit. Once the excitement dies down, the famous hymn motif appears in the woodwinds like the sun coming out from behind the clouds after a storm, which continues in the strings. The piece concludes with triumphant and thundering percussion and fanfare, providing a sense of pride and optimism after all the darkness that had come before.

While *Finlandia* appealed to the Finnish people's sense of national pride, the piece became popular worldwide and marked a turning

point in Sibelius' career. Although he had been recognized as Finland's greatest composer in the 1890s, *Finlandia* made him world famous after 1900. Since its first performance, the work has been arranged for military bands, choruses, and even marimba orchestras, and some adaptations have added lyrics for the hymn passage. The popularity of the piece annoyed Sibelius, who felt it was not his best work. The addition of lyrics irritated him, though he yielded and declared "if the world wants to sing it, it can't be helped."

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 7

Dmitri Shostakovich composed the first three movements of his Symphony No. 7 in C major ("Leningrad") in the summer of 1941 in the middle of the Nazi siege of Leningrad, which ultimately took the lives of nearly a million inhabitants as a result of hunger, cold, and air raids. While most of the members of Leningrad's prestigious artistic institutions evacuated the city that summer, Shostakovich stayed and joined the war effort until he was ultimately evacuated in October of that year, dividing his time between digging ditches and composing. His wife Nina wrote, "Even during the air raids he seldom stopped working. If things began looking too hot, he calmly finished the bar he was writing, waited until the page dried, neatly arranged what he had written, and took it down with him into the bomb shelter." This experience provided inspiration for his "Leningrad" symphony as a work about the struggle against not only fascism but also any form of totalitarianism, although Shostakovich himself called the work "an optimistic composition."

Originally, Shostakovich had intended the symphony to simply be a symphonic poem, but after finishing the composition of the first movement he realized it was only the opening chapter of the work. He proceeded to write the following two movements in great haste, evacuating the city for Kuibyshev against his wishes in October, where he completed the final movement two months later. Shostakovich originally gave titles to each movement—*War*, *Remembrance*, *The Wide Spaces of Our Land*, and *Victory*—before later discarding them.

The first movement opens with a sweeping, resolute theme that reappears throughout the symphony. An ensuing group of themes radiates a relaxed, carefree warmth. In place of a development section, Shostakovich delivers a long orchestral crescendo reminiscent of marching music which Shostakovich himself called the "invasion episode." The theme itself is relatively simple at first, based on an aria from Franz Lehar's *The Merry Widow*, a favorite of Hitler. It begins nonthreateningly and almost at a distance, but increases and becomes ever more present to the point of becoming ominous and menacing, overwhelming both the opening theme of the symphony and the delicate lyrical section that follows. At the climax, he brings back the opening theme in a gesture of defiance and heroism in the face of invasion.

The second movement has touches of irony and humor, a necessary respite after the relentless first movement. The beginning and end of the movement are enigmatic, demonstrating Shostakovich's mastery of solo melody in the winds over a simple repeated, unsettling rhythmic pattern in the strings. At its core, the movement is strident and has a feeling of mockery, with hints of military music launched by the piercing E-flat clarinet while the upper strings, oboe and English horn repeat a clear rhythmic pattern.

The slower third movement begins with a chorale-like theme played by the winds and harps followed by a strong yet simple melody in the strings. A solo flute provides the second theme over pizzicato in the strings which eventually blooms into a duet and ends up in the violins. The central section brings up again the nightmarish climactic moments of the first movement's "invasion," suggesting that war is not over. At the end, the strings take up the same chords played by the winds at the start of the movement.

The finale does not bring victory all at once. At first, it resembles the "invasion" section of the first movement and builds up tension to a grand and victorious C-major conclusion, a restatement of the symphony's opening theme. While this may seem optimistic, the conclusion is filled with discordant notes that have no place in C-major, giving the final chords a bitter ring, bringing to a close a piece burning with defiance, grandeur and eloquence.

Notes from the Director

A monumental masterpiece can often best be experienced knowing the context in which it was composed. Shostakovich wrote his Seventh Symphony in 1941, during the siege of Leningrad by the Nazis. Since eight decades have intervened since then, it might be useful for our audience on this side of the Atlantic to more fully understand the personal and political nature of this context for Shostakovich.

Leningrad (the old city of Petrograd, and currently St. Petersburg) was Dmitri's hometown. This large, beautiful city was in the front lines of defense against German occupation during World War II. The city was encircled by enemy forces – the Finns to the north, the Germans to the east (the Baltic sea), the difficult Lake Ladoga to the east, and a patch of land to the south that was easily conquered by German ground troops.

The Russian citizens under siege coped as much as possible with the unimaginable suffering brought by widespread famine (some even being reduced to cannibalism) and constant incendiary bombs.

The symphony's first three movements were composed in the midst of the blockade, as Shostakovich remained in the city with his family, ready to defend his country. When he was denied the opportunity to fight in the army, he enlisted as a fire marshal as he tried to help mitigate the widespread destruction brought on by the nonstop incendiary bombs. The most significant destruction happened as enemy forces located and destroyed the entire food stores for the city in one deadly sweep. More than half of the estimated 650,000-1,000,000 million killed during the long siege starved or froze to death. The destruction happened on a scale that is difficult for us to fathom – just by comparison, we can think of the World Trade Center attack where around 3,000 people died in the space of a couple of hours, or the bombing of Hiroshima, where around 30,000 died instantaneously.

Shostakovich must have felt the futility of his efforts during this time, but the emotional frustration of the Leningradian's plight finally found catharsis with his drive to write music. A composition unfolded that vividly described the invading army's

transformational role in the hearts of the city's population, ranging from one of salvation to one that embodied the diabolical and grotesque reality of war.

It has been an intense semester teaching a piece of this magnitude to the Lehigh University Philharmonic Orchestra. In America, our recent understanding of war has been colored in the past few decades by myriad wars, ranging from the long "Cold War" to wars in Vietnam and Korea, to the recent War on Terror that leaves questions as to what exactly winning a war looks like. In some instances, it is confusing to identify friends and foes, as today's combatants seldom wear conventional army uniforms. Often there are complex situations where there are no easy answers. During World War II, however, the conflict was characterized to Allied sympathizers in a black-and-white way as one between "good" and "evil." The LU Phil's journey that started in August entailed understanding the world through the prism of students' grandparents. We have been fortunate enough to be immersed in the subject, with everything from a book club on a historical novel, to exploring the historical audible documents. We were treated to an amazing presentation from Dr. Mary Nicholas who brought a visual and vivid dimension of the culture and the happenings around Leningrad before and during the war.

The Symphony became a tool for war propaganda on both sides of the Atlantic; perhaps this has affected some of its power as a stand-alone symphony. The work attained immediate fame as the score got smuggled to the West. Before the year 1942 had come to a close, over sixty performances had taken place. The American premiere was broadcast live, and a great performance of this work by Toscanini can still be heard in a recording of the original broadcast on Youtube. However, by far the most emotional performance remains the one in Leningrad itself, where a brave pilot flew through the enemy lines and air dropped the completed score into the city. A makeshift orchestra was put together from the fifteen remaining members of the Leningrad's Radio Orchestra (the second-tier ensemble had been left behind to fend for itself, with the Leningrad Philharmonic being safely evacuated early during the blockade), and any other army personnel that could play any musical instrument. The resulting performance was broadcast in loudspeakers outside the city to the enemy lines. They

even coordinated the bombing to coincide with the performance – allowing for lulls for reloading cannons, etc. as the performance unfolded. As such, the value of this work as not only a propaganda piece that galvanizes the entire world, but also on the actual lines of defense against the enemy army itself, cannot be discounted. It is in this context that we must weigh the missing information about this work.

That Stalin took an interest in Shostakovich is well known. Only five years earlier, the damning review in the newspaper Pravda of his opera *Lady MacBeth of Mtsensk* was said to be penned by Stalin himself after he stormed out of a performance, as the opera became the talk of Europe. Shostakovich became a household name, a young brash firebrand that took Europe by storm. In the aftermath, Shostakovich swiftly withdrew his next big composition, his Symphony no. 4. He quickly replaced it with his Symphony No. 5 - entitled "A Soviet Artist's response to Just Criticism." The work took off on both sides of the Atlantic and remains one of the most popular symphonies of the twentieth century.

In 1941, as word of Shostakovich's latest composition that centered around the German invasion itself got around, one cannot help but imagine how that news manifested in the high ranks of the party apparatus, and how it was exactly that they eventually prevailed on Shostakovich to leave his hometown and bring his family to safety. In the tumult of the evacuation, he was able to take only two scores with him – and those were significant... One of them was the score to his opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. The other was a score of Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms* (a work our orchestra will perform in April with the Bach Choir of Bethlehem).

Having found safety, one would imagine the pressure Shostakovich would have felt to complete the symphony. It is here that we have to understand the significance of the confluences Shostakovich saw connecting political and musical tropes, including Beethoven, Morse Code, Victory, Propaganda, and the BBC. The letter "V" had become synonymous with the resistance movement throughout Europe and it was actively pursued as a weapon of galvanizing the masses. Every broadcast would start with a timpani recording of the Morse code letter V (three dots followed by a line), which was also the beginning motif of Beethoven's 5th Symphony. That

Shostakovich chose this motif to end his entire symphony would suggest that he used this musical signifier intentionally to close with as much of a feeling of victory as was possible, considering that victory over the Nazi forces in Leningrad itself, let alone in Soviet Russia or Europe, was far from a foregone conclusion in 1942 when the first performances took place. Nevertheless, it is worth considering accounts of German officers who spoke of the first performance they heard on the loudspeakers from Leningrad. One of them remarked that it was the most terrifying thing he had ever heard.

The narrative musical threads that are woven throughout the Seventh Symphony not only contain quotes from many of Shostakovich's musical touchstones, but also trace a historical trajectory of the siege of Leningrad. In the first movement, the work progresses from the simplistic theme that follows Stalin's prescribed Socialist Realist style to the grotesque and diabolical invasion theme, to the despondency and reflection of the aftermath. The lighter scherzo in the second movement gives way to a somber church-like chorale of the third movement, that fluctuates between weeping strings and a blissful and serene tune from a solo flute. The last movement maps the development and evolution of the Victory theme, from initial fragmented and tentative pepperings to a full-blown, impressive roar of Victory.

The work is the biggest undertaking of our orchestra to date and is a tremendous *tour-de-force*. Not only is it an experience for the listener, but it is a test of endurance – mentally, physically and emotionally – from a player's point of view. I will forever be thankful to the members of this orchestra for having had the determination and for having done the hard work to make this performance happen.

- EA

In Memoriam: Herman Bierbaum (1918 - 2014)

Herman Bierbaum was a familiar face around the Zoellner Arts Center for a number of years. He and his wonderful wife Rosina were ushers for Baker Hall and for the Lehigh University Art Galleries from the time the center opened for business in 1997. They both clocked in over 600 hours of volunteering before health reasons prevented them from continuing. However, there was another side to Herman Bierbaum that many were unaware of: his sense of duty and passion for his country demonstrated during his years of service in World War II.



He entered the service in May, 1942, just as Shostakovich's 7th Symphony had premiered on the airwaves in the US and around the world, and was later discharged in December 1945. Herman served in the Army in World War II as Staff Sergeant in the eye clinic of a medical unit, sending daily letters to Rosina (his future wife), and to his mother Marie. He was initially stationed at Fort Dix, NJ, and was then sent to the European theater, serving in Ireland, England, France, and eventually Germany. While at Fort Dix, he would hitchhike home to Bethlehem on the weekends with sacks of blueberries and return with home-made pies for his fellow soldiers. He saved up money during his three years in the army for the engagement ring he gave his sweetheart, Rosina Sacks, selling his rations of cigarettes and sending home his pay each month. Herman would share the frequent care packages he received from his parents, who owned Bierbaum's Superette on 712 East Fourth St. in Southside Bethlehem, with his buddies. He was not allowed to reveal how close he was to the fighting, so would mention different rooms in the family home to indicate how close he was; if he mentioned the wine cellar, he was in a foxhole. If he

addressed his letters to Rosina with the fullest possible formality (Ms. Rosina A. Sacks, RN), it indicated that he had a code inside with his location; the first letter of every seventh word should be pieced together. Herm's great typing skills, ability to speak German, strong seamanship, and interest in medicine stood him in good stead during the war. He assisted with everything from routine eye exams to surgery, helped translate needs of young German POWs, and became editor of the daily newsletter on the long rough trip back across the Atlantic (when the typewriter slid back and forth across the desk during enormous ocean swells). His sense of humor and love of people got him through many a difficult situation, and he made friends in all the countries he was stationed. Serving his country was really a defining time in Herman's life - a time in which he took great pride. Like so many of the 'Greatest Generation,' he cherished freedom and worked hard for everything he achieved.

Although he missed his family and fiancée, Herman valued the experiences that he gained in the army. He made close friendships and appreciated the opportunity to travel throughout Europe. Whenever he had leave, he would go to the mountains of Switzerland. He remained in close touch with several of his fellow soldiers for the next fifty years - especially the mailman, Larry Potts of Kentucky. And, he always proudly celebrated Veteran's Day. Though well known to many in Bethlehem for his future successful business (Bethlehem Motor Boat), Herman's generous volunteer work at the Zoellner Arts Center was equally important to him and to us. He called it a labor of love: art and music were very dear to him. Our orchestra honors his and his family's dedication with these concerts.

Our thanks as well to the generous supporters of our Lehigh Instrumental Scholarships, including the Dexter F. and Dorothy H. Baker Foundation and the Snyder Family Endowed Fund.

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Anne C. and Robert J. Teufel '59 '91P '16GP

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List complete as of October 1, 2014

Report errors or omissions to ZoellnerFriends@lehigh.edu or call (610) 758-5071.

Lehigh University Music Department
2014 – 2015 Season

September

13 at 8 pm
14 at 7 pm
28 at 4 pm

NY Jazz Repertory Orchestra: *Songs of Storyville*
Faculty Recital: Robin Kani, flute with Oren Fader, guitar
The Princeton Singers: *The Dream Concert*

October

18 at 8 pm
19 at 3 pm

LU Jazz Repertory Orchestra: *A Tribute to the Big Bands*
Faculty Recital: Donna McHugh, piano with Natalie Khoma, cello

November

8 at 8 pm
9 at 2 pm
14 & 15 at 8 pm
16 at 3 pm

LU Jazz Ensembles and Combos: *Fall Concert*
Lehigh Student Chamber Music Ensembles
LU Choral Arts: *Carmina amoris (Songs of Love)*
The Wind Ensemble at Lehigh University: *Potpourri for Winds*

December

5 & 6 at 8 pm
7 at 4, 8 pm
13 at 1, 4 pm
14 at 2 pm

LU Philharmonic: *Shostakovich and Sibelius*
LU Choral Arts: *Christmas Vespers in Packer Chapel*
The Nutcracker with Ballet Guild and South Side Sinfonietta
The Nutcracker with Ballet Guild and South Side Sinfonietta

January

25 at 3 pm
31 at 8 pm

The Vega String Quartet: *Four Generations*
LU Jazz Faculty

February

6 & 7 at 8 pm
28 at 8 pm

LU Philharmonic: *Concerto Marathon*
NY Jazz Repertory Orchestra: *International Quartet*

March

1 at 3 pm
22 at 3 pm
27 & 28 at 8 pm

East Winds Quintet: *Music for a Royal Dinner*
Faculty Recital: Michael Jorgensen, violin: *An American in Paris*
LU Choir, Glee Club and Dolce: *That's Amore*

April

10 & 11 at 8 pm
12 at 2 pm
17 at 8 pm
19 at 3 pm
24 & 25 at 8 pm
26 at 2 pm

LU Philharmonic with the Bach Choir of Bethlehem
Senior Recital: Richard Michi, baritone
LU Jazz Repertory Orchestra
Lehigh Student Chamber Music Ensembles at St. Peter's Church
LU Choral Arts: *I Dream a World* with the Penn State Gospel Choir
LU Symphonic Band

May

2 at 8 pm
3 at 3 pm
4 at 4 pm

LU Jazz Ensembles and Combos: *Spring Concert*
The Wind Ensemble at Lehigh University: *Heroes All*
LU Music Department Awards

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